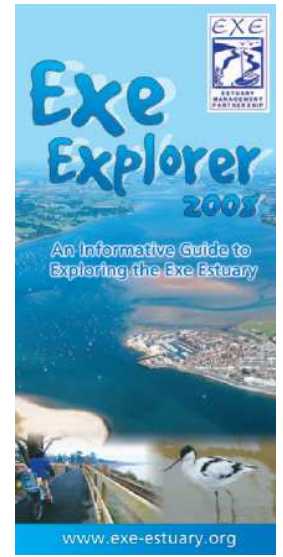


Exe Estuary Annual Report 2007 / 2008



**Exmouth Town
Council**



for birds
for people
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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 The Exe Estuary Annual Report 07 / 08

This report gives a brief summary of the actions achieved by the Exe Estuary Management Partnership from June 2007, when the Exe Estuary Officer Jennifer Lockett was appointed, to the end of the financial year, March 2008.

A large proportion of time, of the eight and a half months the Estuary Officer was in post, was taken up with meeting the officers, community groups, organisations and clubs on the Estuary. Several site visits took place with relevant bodies such as Devon Wildlife Trust, Dawlish Warren, RSPB, Environment Agency, Devon Sea Fisheries, Natural England, The Lower Exe Mooring Authority and East Devon District Council.

An initial meeting took place with each of the Officers of the partnership to discuss the role of the Officer and the priorities of the partners. A full report of these meetings is available on the Exe Estuary Website (www.exe-estuary.org) or by contacting the Exe Estuary Officer, exeestua@devon.gov.uk.

The Estuary Officer also had the opportunity to take the Chief Executive of Devon County Council, Phil Norrey, on a tour of the Estuary to discuss current issues and attended an educational event at the Grand Western Canal.

During the year the Estuary Officer has also attended several key training events such as Beach Master, First Aid at Work and Live Link training.

Section 2 Community Projects

2.1 Education

Collaborated with Andrew Stacy, the lead artist for the Exe Estuary Trail, to deliver 4 education days at Lympstone Primary School. The sessions combined educational activities about the Estuary, such as visiting the Local Nature Reserve and learning about the ecology of the

Estuary, with art work to develop themes for the creation of a mural on a section of wall on the cycle trail between Exmouth and Lympstone. The sessions culminated in the group of 13 students painting their own Estuary animal images onto the wall.

Management Plan Objectives

6.1 Education and Interpretation:

- **Improve education and interpretation facilities around the Estuary.**
- **Improve awareness and understanding**

3.2 Wildlife: Achieve greater appreciation and awareness of biodiversity.

2.2 Volunteer Opportunities

Along with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers the Exe Estuary Officer helped to lead a practical volunteer event on the Old Sludge Beds to create a new set of steps in order to improve public access and enjoyment of the nature reserve as well as vegetation management to improve the nature conservation value of the site.

Management Plan Objectives

6.1 Education and Interpretation: **Improve awareness and Understanding**

3.1 Habitats and Designations: **Identify all habitat re-creation opportunities and progress with the priority sites.**

7.1 Contingency Planning: Identify and put in place structures and procedures for the management of volunteers.

2.3 Clean up Events

More than 60 volunteers joined in at 5 different sites on the Estuary to help clear some of the litter and waste from the Estuary. The event was sponsored by Halcrow and generated significant local media interest including an interview on BBC Radio Devon

Management Plan Objectives

3.2 Wildlife: Increase awareness of the threats posed to wildlife by the presence of litter and waste on the Estuary.

5.2 Water Quality: **Educate and inform about the impact of human activities on water quality.**

5.3 Waste Management and Recycling:

- **Reduce the amount of waste, litter and fly tipping on the Estuary.**
- **Promote regular beach and shoreline clean-ups**
- Prefer and choose businesses using and supplying sustainable packaging when purchasing or contracting services and suppliers.

2.4 Exe Action and Issue Groups (Task and Finish Groups)

An Exe Action Group was organised for the planning of the Estuary Clean Up, and an Issue Group was organised to discuss disturbance issues on the Estuary resulting in the sourcing of £20,000 sponsorship from the Environment Agency to deliver a Disturbance study on the Estuary.

Management Plan Objectives

4.3 Recreation:

- Achieve a balance of interests on the Exe where conflicts arise.
- **Increase awareness and understanding of each other's needs amongst users of the Exe.**

6.1 Education and Interpretation: **Improve awareness and Understanding**

Section 3 Public Awareness

3.1 Leaflets

The Exe Explorer, a key information guide produced by the partnership, was updated within a few months of the Exe Estuary Officer taking up position and has since been updated again in March 2008 in order to include up to date information about the available routes on the Estuary. Yearly additions will continue in this format. Local outlets such as Tourist Information Centres were kept continuously stocked with the leaflet.

Management Plan Objectives

4.5 Public Transport and access:

- Promotion of sustainable transport to access the Estuary
- Encourage walking and cycling as a means of accessing and exploring the Estuary.

6.1 Education and Interpretation:

- **Improve education and interpretation facilities around the Estuary**
- **Ensure that an improved consistent approach to interpretation of the many qualities of the Estuary is created**

3.2 Website

The Exe Estuary website has been changed to a Live-link connection allowing much greater control of content by the Partnership. The website has been redesigned to include a greater variety of information and a clearer navigation format. Work continues on the website in to the 08/09 financial year.

3.3 Newsletter

Two additions of Exepress newsletter were produced and distributed to interested community groups and residents on the Estuary as well as libraries and tourist information centres across Devon.

The newsletters are a great opportunity to promote the activities of the partnership such as Forums, volunteers days, and clean ups. As well as provide up to date information about the Estuary and relevant issues.

Section 4 Exe Estuary Forum

4.1 Autumn Forum

Successfully organised and delivered an autumn forum event covering relevant topics of interest. The forum was attended by more than 90 individuals from local organisations, clubs, community groups and residents. The event re-launched the partnership after a two year period of inactivity and provided an opportunity for local groups to re-engage with the Management Partnership. A new Forum chair was successfully elected and their role has been developed to include chairing Exe Task and Action groups.

Management Plan Objectives

6.1 Education and Interpretation:

- **Improve awareness and Understanding**
- **Ensure that an improved consistent approach to interpretation of the many qualities of the Estuary is created**

Section 5 Partnership

5.1 Management Group

Two Management Group Meetings were held that allowed the partnership to discuss relevant issues, be updated on the work of the Estuary Officer and approve the 08/09 Action Plan.

During the year RPSB were successfully approved to join the partnership as funding partners.

The Memorandum of Agreement for the partnership was successfully updated, to include additions necessary for the RSPB to be able to join, and sent to partners to be signed.

5.2 Officers Working Group

Two Officers Working Groups were held that allowed the Officers to guide the work of the Exe Estuary Officer and provide feedback and comments on work executed so far.

5.3 Promoting the Partnership

All opportunities to promote the work of the Exe Estuary Management Partnership were taken, including two radio interviews and numerous newspaper articles.

Presentations were given about the Estuary and the partnership to Exe Sailing club, the Exmouth Society, Dawlish Town Council and Moose International

Attended relevant conferences including Natural England's Marine Protected Areas conference in Scarborough, a Coastal Futures conference in London, and the Devon Maritime Forum in order to keep abreast of national issues and events of relevance to the Estuary.

5.4 Representing the Partnership

Represented the partnership on Estuary Related Projects such as:

- NCN consultation
- Exmouth Visitor Centre PPG
- Police Boat Patrol Planning Meeting
- Devon Estuary Officers Meeting
- Exmouth Town Management Plan
- Coastal Management Study Steering Group
- Exmouth Community Association.
- Water Framework Directive workshop
- Exe Estuary Trail opening event
- Shoreline Management Plan community presentation
- Exe Catchment Sensitive Farming Steering Group

5.5 Funding

Funding Partners:

Devon County Council, East Devon District Council, Teignbridge District Council, Natural England, Exmouth Town Council, and the RSPB.

Funding from Partnership = £34,400
Total Income = £57,970
Total Expenditure = £39,084
Total carry Forward to 08/09 = £19,486

- The Partnership had a carry forward of monies not spent in 2006/2007 of £23,570 this was due to not having an Estuary Officer in post.
- The cost of the Estuary Clean up was sponsored by Halcrow for £300.
- The Environment Agency have sponsored the partnership £20,000 to deliver a disturbance study over the next 3 to 5 years.

Section 6 Supporting Strategies

6.1 Coastal Management Study

The Partnership have been the key facilitators for raising public awareness about the study and its progress with a presentation at the Autumn Forum, a dedicated public event in February, and regular updates on the website and in the newsletters.

Attended all steering group meetings for the Coastal Management Study.

Management Plan Objectives

2. Climate Change: **Assess the effects of climate change on the SPA and identify suitable mitigation**

3.1 Habitats and Designations: **Ensure all flood defence plans adhere to nature conservation legislation**

4.4 Tourism: Consider and limit the impact of coastal defences and coastal management on beach amenities, wherever possible

6.2 Action Plan April 08 – March 09

Produced an action plan for the following year that was approved by the Management Partnership.